

sovereignty, diversification and multilateralization of our external relations. Vietnam wants to be friends with all country and trusted partners with all nations and nationalities in the international community. And along that line, with—Vietnam will continue to strengthen the fine relationship between Vietnam and the United States under the framework defined by the two countries' leaders.

I hope that with the fruitful outcome of my visit, the Vietnam-U.S. relationship

will be elevated to new heights in the interest of both peoples, of peace, stability, and development cooperation in the region and the world.

Thank you, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you. Yes, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:53 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Prime Minister Dung spoke in Vietnamese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Honoring 2007 and 2008 NCAA Championship Teams *June 24, 2008*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. It is an honor to be here with so many fine student athletes now known as national champs.

It seems like the South Lawn is a fitting place to hold champions day. After all, we have a swimming pool, a tennis court, a running track, a putting green, and a basketball court, just in case any of our athletes here want to squeeze in a little friendly competition. *[Laughter]*

I appreciate the fact that you showed incredible discipline, skill, perseverance. It's hard to become a champ, and that's why we love to honor people here at the White House when you become one. And one of the things I tell people is, is that if you work hard and become a repeat champion, I look forward to welcoming you back to the White House. However, this time around it's not going to work. My eligibility has run out. *[Laughter]* But I do wish you all the very best. So the next President can welcome you to the White House, but in the meantime, we're going to honor the folks here today.

I welcome the members of the Cabinet. Mr. Secretary, thanks for coming. Members of Congress, thank you all for being here;

United States Senators, United States Congressmen, student athletes, coaches, school officials, and fans.

Today we honor 20 teams from 15 campuses in 13 States. These athletes excelled from tee boxes in California to ski slopes in Colorado to parallel bars in Oklahoma to bowling alleys on Maryland's Eastern Shore. You're represented by a wide variety of mascots: the Orange and the Golden Bears; the Hawks, the Eagles, and the Ducks; the Bruins, the Buckeyes, and two different types of Bulldogs. Despite these differences, you all share the right to call—be called champs, a title you'll keep for the rest of your life.

We have two first-time champions here today: UCLA women's tennis and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore women bowling Hawks. We have two teams that have spent a long time waiting to reclaim their national crowns. The University of Oregon men's cross country team brought the national title to Eugene for the first time in 30 years. I know you're proud, Senator. And the UCLA men's golf Bruins earned their first national championship in 20 years.

Even more impressive than winning the national title is becoming a repeat champion. Some of the teams here have accomplished that feat. Cal's men water polo team, University of Tennessee women's basketball, University of Georgia men's tennis—they're all repeat champs. Congratulations to you.

And then we've got two teams that have achieved the rare four-peat, the University of Georgia women's gymnastics, affectionately known as the Gym Dogs. And two Senators are here to honor them. UCLA women's water polo Bruins are here.

On the road to the championship, some teams recorded particularly memorable achievements. The University of North Carolina women's field hockey team compiled a perfect 24-0 record, making them just the fifth team in the sport history to—sport's history to finish undefeated. Penn State men's volleyball and Penn State women's volleyball pulled off a rare double championship, winning both the men's and women's title in the same year. Charlie Dent is here representing the team.

The University of Denver men's and women's ski team competed with one fewer skier than their rivals, making them only the second ski team in NCAA history to win the title shorthanded. And we congratulate you.

The USC women's golf team set a school record with five All-Americans on their championship team. [Applause] And all five just yelled. [Laughter]

Some of the champs here are building on long legacies of excellence. Ohio State men's and women's fencing finished in the top five for the seventh consecutive year and earned the third fencing championship

in school history. And we welcome you here.

Boston College men's ice hockey prevailed in the Frozen Four for the third time in school history and the second time in this decade.

The University of Minnesota Duluth women's ice hockey Bulldogs—the Senator—earned their fourth championship in the past 8 years. It's good to see you again.

The University of Oklahoma men's gymnastics upset the top seed to win their fifth national title in the past 7 years.

And the Syracuse men's lacrosse team claimed their 10th national championship, which sets a new NCAA lacrosse record.

We honor you all, and we welcome you to the White House. And as importantly, we thank you for your contributions to the communities in which you live. These athletes have volunteered at food banks during holidays. They have visited schools to inspire children with disabilities. They've encouraged literacy and good health. They've raised money to fight cancer. What I'm telling you are—is, they're great athletes and good citizens. And for that, our country is grateful.

We're glad that you're here. We congratulate you and your families and your schools for your achievements. We ask for God's blessings on you and on our country. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:08 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Agriculture Edward T. Schafer; Sens. Gordon H. Smith, Saxby Chambliss, Johnny Isakson, and Amy Klobuchar; and Rep. Charles W. Dent.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Western Balkans

June 24, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication stating that the Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2008.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999,

in Kosovo, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, in Executive Order 13219 and to Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, has not been resolved. The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in Executive Order 13219, as amended, are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 24, 2008.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Jalal Talabani of Iraq

June 25, 2008

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome a friend, President Talabani, back to the Oval Office. He is the President of a free Iraq. He is a man who's been on the frontlines of helping to unify Iraq and to help Iraq recover from a brutal regime, that of Saddam Hussein.

I complimented the President on the progress that the Government has made. I complimented the President on the fact that as security has improved, he and his fellow officials are reaching out to all aspects of society to help people realize the blessings of a free life.

There's still a lot of work to be done; we recognize that. We talked of a variety of subjects. We talked about a strategic framework agreement that suits the Iraqi Government. We talked about elections and different laws that have been passed. I did compliment the President on working hard to see to it that the legislative session this year has been very successful. We talked about the fact that the economy's improving and that the attitude of the people there has improved immeasurably over the years.